

INTRODUCTION

The Military Prime Contract File (MPCF) was developed as a data base in 1966 and maintained through 1975. It provides statistical analysis of DOD contracts in excess of \$10,000 arranged by contractor, type of service or product provided, contractor location and by fiscal year.

There is one record for each contract and includes information as to the length of the contract, business size, and method of contract award. For the years 1966-1973, the records indicate whether the contract was for materials or services in support of the United States involvement in Southeast Asia.

The file was used by DOD to provide the President and Congress with reports of military expenditures by region and state, and by service category and federal service classification (type of service or product supplied), and of the 100 and 500 contractors with the largest dollar amount of awards per fiscal year. Other reports generated included breakdowns of educational and non-profit institutions receiving prime contracts and companies providing research and development services to DOD.

Form DD 350 was used to gather data from the contractor. It was submitted by the contractor for each contract awarded and for each contract extension and update amounting to more than \$10,000. Other computer generated information was added to each record by DOD. Although almost all data elements remained consistent and can be traced over time, there are a few which were added, deleted or modified in response to changing conditions and needs. For example, beginning in 1974, the data element identifying the contract as Vietnam related was replaced with one on minority business.

The data only include information concerning the prime contractor and do not reflect the large amount of subcontracting for basic and intermediate materials or components which occurred. This must be taken into consideration when using the data as it has been estimated that at least half of the hard goods supplied and an undetermined percentage of the service contracted for were subcontracted by the prime contractors. A substantial amount of material and component fabrication and other subcontract work may have been done outside the state where final assembly or delivery took place.¹

The records do not provide any direct indication as to whether the state listed is actually the state in which the actual production work was done. For the majority of contracts with manufacturers, the data reflect the location of the plant where the product was finally processed or assembled. If processing or assembly was performed in more than one plant, the location shown is the plant where the largest dollar amount of work took place or where management responsibility was centered. Construction contracts are shown for the state where the construction was performed. For purchases from wholesale or

¹Department of Defense, "Military Prime Contract Awards by Region and State, Fiscal Years 1969-1971," 1971, p. i.

other distribution firms, the location is the address of the contractor's place of business. For service contracts, the location is generally the place where the service was performed. For transportation and communications services, the home office address of the contracting company was frequently used.

The time span of the MPCF corresponds with the massive build-up of the United States involvement in Vietnam. By manipulation of this data, the growth and extent of the relationship between the American military and American industry throughout and immediately following the Vietnam War can be documented.

Linkage of this file with International Balance of Payment files and Foreign Military Sales files in Record Group 330, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, is possible and would help to document the extent of DOD's contract expenditures in these areas.